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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

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Ruling Factions Fight for Workers' Loyalty, But:

Capitalist Elections Are a Deadly Trap

Who wins — and who votes — in November's elections are crucial questions for the imperialist, Rockefeller-led faction of U.S. capitalists served by Barack Obama and the Democratic Party. The segment of the latter's base — trade unions, environmentalists, civil libertarians, advocates of government regulation, etc., who might stay home out of disenchantment with Obama's broken promises — have the latter worried over Tea Party candidates. They threaten the liberals' agenda of widening war, war taxes, and wartime regulatory powers consolidated in the White House.

Rulers' Push for Two-Party Voting a Dead End for Workers' Anger

Electoral politics are the capitalist class's ace-in-the-hole as their most effective weapon for stifling working-class rebellion against the imperialists' genocidal warfare abroad and racist attacks at home. It clouds the need for workers' revolution. "You can vote the good guys in and the bad guys out" runs the bosses' deadly lie to workers.

But, in fact, all politicians front for one group or another of capitalist enemies of our class. The anti-tax, small-government Tea Partiers represent a variety of capitalists whose profits don't directly depend on U.S. military operations overseas.

Poverty, unemployment, and cuts in education, housing and health care are soaring because of trillion-dollar war layouts. This is especially true for black and Latino workers who suffer double the jobless rates, the worst housing, health care and schools. On September 16, the Census Bureau revealed that while overall, one family in seven lives in poverty, for black workers it's one in four.

Two days later, Obama urged black members of Congress "to go back to your neighborhoods,…your workplaces,… [your] churches" to get their constituents to the polls.

So the liberal imperialists are striving mightily to defeat potential obstructionists like Tea Party Senate hopefuls Rand Paul and Sharron Angle. And just as urgent for war-bent, globally-focused U.S. rulers is luring workers to view voting, rather than militant action, as the solution to their worsening misery.

Tea Partiers Won't Go Away, So Liberals Try to Co-opt Them

Voting proves so powerful in misleading the working class that liberal capitalists see a silver lining even in the Tea Party movement: it draws angry workers to the harmless polling booth rather than to either the strike picket line or to right-wing fringe movements and gun-toting terrorist groups.

The NY Times, the liberal imperialists' top mouthpiece, has anointed its scribe Kate Zernike as official Tea-Party watcher and just published her new book, "Boiling Mad — Inside Tea Party America." Zernike hopes the Republican Party's dwindling imperialist establishment wing can somehow co-opt the Tea Party's voter-boosting energy. These are the descendents of the old,

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Racist Attacks Spread As:

PL'er Leads Sit-in Supporters to Defy Cops, Save School Center

CHICAGO, September 17 — Chanting "Si se puede" and "We want a library, we're not criminals," about 100 mostly Latino parents, elementary school children and supporters crossed the police line when a veteran comrade made the call to crash the police tape. They were supporting the dozen parents and children who were occupying the elementary school field house the Chicago Public School (CPS) bosses want to demolish.

Earlier, the protestors who had been occupying the field house for three days were rushed by the cops and threatened with arrests. Meanwhile, many supporters who were bringing in supplies were blocked from entry. The racist cops and ex-cop Michael Shields (a cousin of Michelle Obama), head of CPS security, taped off the entire block. The cops were preventing anyone who didn't live on the block from entering.

We heard from a close friend inside the field house that they were preparing for arrests, predicting the cops would move in once school was out and the grounds cleared. Acting quickly, a veteran comrade from the neighborhood who had been there for two days bringing in food and building ties with those inside, called on everyone present to cross the police lines and march to the field house.

When the comrade crossed the tape line, youth and parents and moms pushing strollers began crossing en masse! Without the comrade's militant leadership and the massive support of the workers and youth, those inside likely would have been arrested, ending the sit-in. It was a momentous afternoon for everyone. When we showed up chanting and hopping the fence, the police were taken by surprise, giving a reprieve for the parents inside.

The demolition of this field house is part of a larger racist trend to attack this city's mostly black and Latino communities. This includes privatization of schools (Charters), massive layoffs of teachers and increasing violence and killings of hundreds of black and Latino youth as schools are shut down and students shuffled into neighborhoods with rival gangs.

Of course, with racist mass murderer Obama commanding the slaughters in Iraq and Afghanistan and appointing ex-CPS boss Arne Duncan to the Education post in his cabinet, racist privatization, cutbacks and layoffs are occurring nationwide. This field house, in particular, has been used for after-school programs as well as a space for teachers and parents to organize in. They recently led a fight to win $1.4 million for school renovations and for the field house to become a library.

Instead, the school bosses and local alderman Danny Solis, a Mayor Daley lackey and new mayoral candidate, want to construct a soccer field for the local private school. But the parents have had enough, which is why they've occupied the place for three days.

We in PLP know that this or any reform struggle will not lead to the quality of education our children deserve, namely being taught the truth about the horrors of capitalism and the need for communist revolution. That's why PLP'ers and friends are trying to make this struggle "a school for communism."

Ultimately, the bosses may concede on this field house but it won't be a victory unless we build the Party. Otherwise, it will only be another example of how the reform struggle simply builds patriotism and class-collaboration — boss-worker "unity," a hallmark of fascism.

Thus far the Party has played a modest but critical role. Without our leadership this struggle would likely be over. However, now we must deepen our ties with the parents and youth we've met; bring our friends to support and distribute CHALLENGE; and fight to build PLP amid this small class struggle, one that could help start fires elsewhere.✪

30 Years of Carter Oil Doctrine:

Obama's Big Lie Masks Deadlier Mid-East Wars

"The American combat mission in Iraq has ended….All U.S. troops will leave by the end of next year."

Like all successful political misleaders, Obama brazenly wields the above "Big Lie." Late last month he promised speedy U.S. withdrawal from Iraq (and Afghanistan), after "stabilizing the local government." Within a week, U.S. troops were engaged in deadly gunfights in and near Baghdad.

The U.S. imperialists Obama serves have no intention of ending warfare in the oil-rich Middle East. The new phase of their Iraq campaign has an armed force of 145,000 — 50,000 U.S. troops and 95,000 paid mercenaries — in as many as 14 permanent bases. In addition to combat operations, they aim to establish a virtual colonial army, the 655,000-strong "Iraqi Security Forces," under U.S. command.

Iraq and Afghanistan (and Bigger Wars Coming) Stem from Liberal Imperialists' 'Carter Doctrine'

In 1980, liberal president Jimmy Carter declared the greater Middle East a U.S. war zone. Reacting both to Exxon's loss of its Iranian sources to Islamic clerical fascists and to the threat the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan posed to the entire U.S.-led Mid-East oil racket, he advanced the "Carter Doctrine." It has steered U.S. policy to this day and reads in part:

"The region which is now threatened by Soviet troops in Afghanistan is of great strategic importance: It contains more than two-thirds of the world's exportable oil. The Soviet effort to dominate Afghanistan has brought Soviet military forces to within 300 miles of the Indian Ocean and close to the Straits of Hormuz, a waterway through which most of the world's oil must flow. …We've increased and strengthened our naval presence in the Indian Ocean, and we are now making arrangements for key naval and air facilities to be used by our forces in the region of northeast Africa and the Persian Gulf….

"An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force."

In 2010, Iran has become the main immediate danger to U.S. Mid-East petrostrategic interests, with help, nuclear and otherwise, from an emerging Russian imperialism. Oil-thirsty China is the new U.S. rival on the block. So U.S. liberal imperialists are seeking to turn Iraq, home to the world's third largest available oil reserves, into an armed client state, whose loyalty 145,000 U.S. soldiers and hired guns will enforce.

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The Rockefeller-funded Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS, website, 9/1/10), a top think-tank for U.S. imperialism, foresees that well beyond Obama's 2011 exit deadline, the Pentagon will routinely provide Iraqi forces with "critical enablers like intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance, intra-theater logistics, air mobility, and potentially fire support; and finally, direct U.S. military help securing Iraq's airspace and territorial waters."

And if things get really bad, the U.S. will seize Iraq's oil fields: "DoD (Department of Defense) might be called on by the president …to secure key facilities that are both vulnerable to damage and essential to Iraq's political and economic viability and independence." That's why "the core of the remaining troops, however, will consist of six Advise and Assist Brigades which have major combat capabilities." (CSIS, 8/31/10)

Another Obama "Big Lie" insinuated that Bush, Jr., influenced by neo-cons like Cheney, started the Iraq war in error: "He [Bush] and I [Obama] disagreed about the war from its outset." However, not only did Senator Obama vote for every annual funding for the war, but, in fact, it was Obama's cherished liberal, imperialist U.S. Establishment that made the strongest push for the 2003 U.S. invasion.

The liberal New York Times and the Rockefeller-run Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) led the charge. Times scribe Judith Miller (and the Times editorial page) railed about Iraq's (non-existent) "weapons of mass destruction" program. The CFR published arms inspector Richard Butler's book, "The Greatest Threat," comparing Saddam Hussein to Hitler.

But Bush Jr.'s real blunder, in the eyes of U.S. imperialists' (including Obama's), lay in failing to deploy forces large enough to assure an expected four-fold increase in Iraqi oil production for the invaders' benefit. [Iraq today pumps crude at pre-war levels.]

The current wave of U.S.-led wars results not from the "good" or "bad" decisions of presidents but from the post-Vietnam grand strategy of U.S. imperialism. It hinges on U.S. military control of Mid-East energy supplies.

U.S. Think-Tank and Pentagon Boost Saudi-Iranian Oil War

But as crucial as Iraq is, Saudi Arabia remains U.S. imperialism's energy trump card and thus gets special attention from the Pentagon, if not from mainstream media. "Regardless of the outcome of Iraq's effort to forge a new government, it will not become a major regional military power again for at least a decade. If the U.S. is to have any major strategic partner in the Gulf, it is going to be Saudi Arabia." (CSIS, 8/24/10) The latter reveals "a major new arms sale to Saudi Arabia…in excess of $50 billion…." The sale will include:

- 84 new Boeing F-15 combat aircraft, virtually ensuring Saudi air superiority over Iran;
- Refurbishing 70 existing Saudi F-15S strike aircraft;
- Up to 60 AH-64D Longbow Apache attack helicopters, and upgrades to 12 existing AH-64As that can be used to deal with threats in areas like the Yemeni border, defend coastal and offshore targets;
- 72 UH-60 helicopters, in addition to the 22 UH-60s now in Saudi forces;
- Upgrades to Saudi Arabia's Patriot PAC 2 missile forces that will improve air defense against any Iranian air threat;
- New patrol ships like the Littoral Combat Ship and other naval weapons that will help defend Saudi coastal waters and offshore facilities, and deal with the major emerging threat from the naval branch of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards.

Despite Obama's "The-Iraq-War-Is-Over" proclamation, Mid-East war preparations are intensifying among imperialist and regional capitalist powers, keeping pace with their sharpening rivalry for control of almighty oil. More death and suffering awaits the working class.

That's why PLP is building a new international communist movement, with a base among workers in factories and unions, in the military, in schools and on campuses, in communities and in all of the bosses' principal mass organizations. Our recent convention reflected that, with delegates from 13 countries on five continents, from Tel-Aviv to Tanzania to Texas, from Mexico City to Ethiopia, from Colombia to California to Brooklyn.

Crushing the war-making profit system through communist revolution is the only solution. This is the ultimate goal towards which our Party builds. ✪

OUR FIGHT

✭**Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.**

✭**Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.**

✭**Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.**

✭**While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.**

✭**Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.**

✭**Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.**

✭**Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.**

✭**Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.**

✭**Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.**

✭**Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!**

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Why Articles Are Not Signed

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual. While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

Students, Teachers Rally vs. Racist Bosses' Layoff Attack

CHICAGO, August 9 — Over 750 students at a Chicago high school have gotten a program change at least once; many have had three. This was on top of a chaotic start to the school year due to Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) disorganization and racist contempt for the most educationally-neglected students in the city. This school is 99.5% black and 0.5% Latino; 20% are homeless, 30% have special needs, and 100% are low-income.

The school's namesake, Paul Robeson, was a relentless defender of the working class and a pro-communist opponent of racism, but Chicago's "boutique education" model lets CPS run rampant over the needs of the students here. Because the capitalist system uses racism to divide the working class and cannot provide jobs for all its youth when they finish school, districts like CPS constantly "reform" education so that it is worse for black, working-class students.

Two years ago, the school's population jumped dramatically, requiring CPS to hire nine new teachers to cover the classrooms. Because of red tape, the new teachers weren't in front of their students until November. There were at least 35 students who had day-to-day substitutes in all their core classes — English, science, math, and social studies — for two months. They begged their division teacher, a comrade, to teach them something in the 15 minutes they spent together daily. Many other freshman students that year were missing one to three teachers.

This year, school started a month early on a new "year-round" schedule, and the population dropped dramatically. Because of CPS's lack of planning, neighborhood schools are rarely prepared for the first day of school. Students know this and often delay coming to school until the dust settles, sometimes as late as the third week of September.

The second week of August, middle management mandated that the principal change student schedules in preparation for displacing up to 15 teachers. The last week of August, CPS lawyers told the principal to choose seven teachers to displace by Labor Day, the traditional first day of school for the majority of CPS students. This mandated "leveling" of classes, without even knowing how many teachers or students would be in the building by the end of September, caused incessant student schedule changes. At times, whole classes would be lined up outside a classroom and told they had a different class, but no way to find out where or what the class was.

Disgusted by the constant changes and uncertainty, students began to circulate petitions; there was talk of a walk out or strike. As a Board of Education meeting came up, the teachers called in the union for assistance, which provided two busses to the school. Over 60 students and 10 teachers came to the Board meeting, rallying outside. They shouted, "Save our students! Save our teachers! Save our schools!" Teachers reported that students had never been so energized. One said, "I could see the students' sincerity in doing what they could to save their teachers' jobs. They wanted to help… They wanted to be heard. Some took leadership and led chants, and some backed up the chants. They were united in their cause."

Unfortunately, as the Board meeting started, the rally lost their political leadership and they simply returned to the school. Teachers back at the school were excited to hear the reports from the students, but the lack of a next step left the movement at a dead end. A young comrade at the rally made a self-criticism about his lack of leadership and inability to lead his classmates to further action. A comrade teacher made a self-criticism of not involving young comrades in the school in planning the action.

However, the student reflected on the rally and made a list of people he could start talking to about CHALLENGE. The teacher, who had been previously discouraged about selling CHALLENGE at school found a base of 10 teachers to start distributing the paper to. We are committed to fighting back against these racist attacks, and the struggle continues! ✪



Bus Strikers Ready for Action; Misleaders Jump In to Save Bosses

MONTCLAIR, NJ, September 13 — On September 2, Amalgamated Transit Union local 1317 went on strike following 18 months without a new contract. The struck company, Decamp Bus Lines, a private outfit transporting 8,000 commuters from New Jersey into NYC, is joining "the race to the bottom."

As elsewhere, DeCamp wants to cap wages, freeze pensions, increase health care costs, create a two-tier pay system for new drivers and eliminate defined contributions towards 401Ks. Under these proposals, a newly-hired bus cleaner would start at $8 an hour and max out at $13.50!

Three months ago the workers voted to strike but the local's leadership refused to call it, keeping the workers on the job and off the picket lines. Eventually pressure from rank-and-file drivers, mechanics and cleaners forced the labor fakers to call a strike.

Now, after a two-week strike, the union leadership has assumed its role once again, ordering a "temporary" end to the walkout as it returns to negotiations.

This struggle mirrors the current situation where many workers are ready to fight back as the bosses steal more and more from them, but the union leadership ensures that workers remain passive. Many of these DeCamp workers were prepared to stay out and potentially develop more militancy with struggle.

This makes it even more important for the PLP to bring our communist ideas to these workers. As these sellout unions organize thousands of workers to demonstrate in Washington, D.C. on October 2 to divert their anger into supporting the Democrats in November, PLP will be present to spread our revolutionary communist politics. The only way workers will be able to smash these attacks is to organize for a communist society run by and for the working class, without exploiting bosses and their labor lieutenants. ✪

LA Cops' Racist Murder Sparks Workers' Rebellion

"The police here don't give you tickets, they shoot you." That's what one worker in the LA Westlake community told a crowd of workers.

Recently a vile police thug shot a working-class immigrant man from Guatemala, Manuel Jamines, twice in the head and then handcuffed him. The cop, Frank Hernandez, known as "El Pelon" by the workers in the community, has a past history of killing workers. Police reports state Manuel was drunk, "had a knife" and was "threatening a pregnant woman." Eyewitnesses say Manuel never had a knife and was not threatening anyone.

The next day there was a protest rally. The following day people gathered at the infamous Rampart police station, a block from the murder site. This station has a history of being one of the most corrupt in LA.

Soon a rebellion developed. That night workers threw stones and eggs at the police station. The pigs came out of their pig pen and began attacking the workers, firing tear gas and rubber bullets, terrorizing the neighborhood. Residents in the high-rise buildings threw televisions and air conditioners at the cops.

On the third day the cops organized a "town hall meeting." The crowd was yelling angrily at the police chief, who said "police are not trained to take people down with knives." We all know they're trained to shoot to kill. The chief also claimed he wanted "peace and calm" which was a lie because at that very moment police were terrorizing the community with their squad cars and helicopters.

On the final day of the rebellion, we started chants like "Manuel vive, la Lucha Sigue" ("Manuel Lives, the Struggle Continues"). Throughout that night the cops assaulted any worker with a political message and a bullhorn. They attacked the crowd three times, arresting three workers and shooting one with rubber bullets.

About 250 workers stayed in a vigil throughout the night. Many more cops attempted to smother the workers' outrage. Police were moving in and out of blocks all night long. We stayed late into the evening.

The following Saturday another rally and march protested the murder. We distributed 100 CHALLENGES and many leaflets.

Resistance like this erupts spontaneously against police attacks all the time. Murder by the police occurs daily. They will continue as long as workers don't organize to fight back. We don't want just little pockets of resistance, but need an organized militant movement, and ultimately a communist revolution.

An LA Comrade

UAW Forces Mail Vote After Workers Chase Sellouts

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, September 18 — After being run out of the Local 23 union hall by hundreds of angry GM stamping plant workers last month (see CHALLENGE, 8/22), the International UAW is trying to ram through a new contract that would cut wages in half. Rather than directly confront the workers again, they're imposing a mail ballot, something never done in a factory where votes occur either in the hall or in the shop. The ballots, going out this week, will be counted on September 27.

As part of Obama's GM bailout and restructuring, this plant is to be closed. JD Norman Industries made an offer to buy the plant, and sign a UAW contract, if the union agreed to a 50% wage-cut. Last May, the workers voted 384-22 against reopening the contract, but the International UAW and Local 23 President Ray Kennedy continued negotiations, reaching a deal not one of the "negotiators" will have to live with.

'Traitor Go Home!'

They had scheduled a ratification meeting for August 15, but hundreds of angry workers drowned them out with shouts of "Traitor," and "Go Home," forcing them to slip out the back door.

Since the union hall isn't safe for the sellouts, their senior partners at GM are allowing them into the plant to speak to the workers either one on one or in small groups, where workers are subject to GM disciplinary actions if they "act up." This is what UAW President Bob King calls the "21st Century UAW," a boss-union partnership. (See Box)

The majority of workers here have high seniority and many are GM "migrants," having moved from plant to plant as factories shut down. They don't fear one more closing since they are eligible for transfer to another GM plant. They don't want massive wage-cuts following them for the rest of their lives, although that die has already been cast.

Indiana Governor Threatens Workers

GM wants to sell this plant and turn it into a low-wage parts supplier. The UAW wants to hold onto more than 600 members, and they're ready to sacrifice workers' wages and health care to do so. Meanwhile, the scab Governor of Indiana has threatened to deny these long-term GM workers unemployment benefits if the plant closes because they reject the wage-cuts.

Decades of "concessions to save jobs" and partnering with U.S. auto bosses has reduced UAW membership from 1.5 million to under 350,000, with the domestic auto industry now more than 50% non-union. The recent bailout and restructuring has cost yet another 200,000 jobs and cut wages in half.

The racist nature of these attacks is evident in the streets of Detroit, Flint, Lansing and many other GM towns. Today it's wages and jobs. Tomorrow it will be the lives of our sons and daughters in an endless war for control of Mid-East oil and pipelines that has already costs millions of workers' lives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We will use the October 2 March on Washington to build the revolutionary communist PLP in the auto industry and in the UAW. ✪

'A UAW for the 21st Century': Boss-Union 'Partnership'

On August 2, fresh from his coronation as head of the UAW, President Bob King delivered a talk to the Center for Automotive Research Conference, an industry group, where he laid out his vision for the union's future:

• "We are deeply grateful to the Obama administration…for saving the American auto industry. Enabling our companies to survive and turn around has saved hundreds of thousands of good jobs that would have been gone forever.…UAW members took wage-cuts of $7,000 to $30,000 a year. Benefits were also reduced significantly. Restructuring resulted in the loss of nearly 200,000 jobs."

• "The UAW of the 21st Century must be fundamentally and radically different from the UAW of the 20th Century. This is a new world, and we must reinvent our union.…"

• "The 20th Century UAW fell into a pattern with our employers where we saw each other as adversaries rather than partners.…The 21st Century UAW no longer views…management as our adversaries or enemies, but as partners.…Our new relationships…are built upon a foundation of respect, shared goals and a common mission."

• "So the keywords of the 21st Century UAW are flexibility, innovation, quality, teamwork, productivity, continuous cost savings and respect. The rigid demarcation between management and labor that was so entrenched in the old model is discarded."

That's it, from the horses' mouth, proof positive of what PLP has always warned. The greatest threat to the workers and the revolutionary communist movement is not the gutter racists and open fascists, as bad as they are, but the liberals! The Tea Party or Sarah Palin didn't wipe out 200,000 auto jobs and cut wages in half, although they certainly support it. It was Obama and the union leaders.

In a period of growing war and deepening economic crisis, "Shared goals and common mission" means doing whatever is necessary to maintain U.S. imperialism at the top of the heap. It means war and fascism, with a "thank" you from UAW President Bob King.

PL Calls for Strike:
Union 'Answer' to Cuts: Press Conference Boosting School Board Prez!

LOS ANGELES, September 15 — Progressive Labor Party was able to put forward revolutionary politics at a sell-out school union's photo-op. September 8 was to have been the first day of classes for the huge L.A. Unified School District. With the capitalist budget crisis bearing down on them, thousands of working parents scrambled to find care for the many thousands of elementary-through-high school students locked out by the "furlough" days [unpaid days off] imposed by the Board of Education.

The response of the union representing tens of thousands of furloughed workers? SEIU 99, called a press conference with the head of the very School Board that is executing the cuts! This was the first of seven days slashed from this academic year.

The union boasted of their workers: "We're doing our part, taking furloughs, working the jobs of two or three people [and] some of us have even been laid off."

"Thank you, SEIU 99, for taking leadership in these difficult times for our school district," intoned Monica Garcia, School Board president, at a small press conference called by the union representing cafeteria servers, school bus drivers and classroom aides. The union boasted of the leadership they have given their workers: "We're doing our part, taking furloughs, working the jobs of two or three people [and] some of us have even been laid off."

Garcia was invited by the SEIU leadership to be the main speaker at the press conference. She thanked the union for helping the School Board lay off school staff and impose cuts, while keeping workers quiet in the face of these attacks.

PL supporters passed out a flier titled "STRIKE against the furloughs and cutbacks in education!" It called out the union leadership for refusing to fight back and for accepting cutbacks in order to protect capitalism. The SEIU leadership was seriously upset by the good response many members had to our anti-capitalist critique. Despite efforts by the SEIU leadership to prevent workers from taking the fliers, they were requested, received, and read by many in attendance. This positive aspect of the rally was a stark contrast to the sad line that the union "leadership" put forward when they spoke.

A weakness in our leaflet was not criticizing the racism of the School Board's cuts. The majority of students and the members of Local 99 are Latin and black. Still, several contacts with school staff were made and are being followed up. These names and phone numbers are real gold to our movement. With them, and more like them, we'll bury a capitalist system so inhuman that it attacks school students even before they are old enough to be sacrificed in the bosses' wars for profit. ✪

Mexico:
Rulers' 'Policy' for Youth: No Jobs, No Schools; Drugs and Death

MEXICO CITY — Youth unemployment in the world reached 81 million the highest level in history. The International Labour Organization (ILO) which provided this information predicts that unemployment will continue to rise. The situation is not favorable for those with a job, because the agency found that 28% of young workers, equivalent to 152 million, survive in extreme poverty in households where every person lives on less than $ 1.25 a day. The number of young people trapped in unemployment and working poverty has grown and will persist for at least another generation, stated the spokesman of the ILO. Those are the official figures, reality of course is even worse.

This bleak picture of social degradation takes particular forms in different parts of the world. For example, in Mexico, 7.5 million youth are neither studying nor working. There is no room or need for them in the productive sector. They live in conditions which are not adequate for personal development or for healthy physical growth. These conditions cause increased dropout rates.

Instead of school or work, these youth migrate around Mexico trying to survive and often become cannon fodder for organized crime. The physiological and ideological impact of this life misdirects these youth into feelings of aggression and anger against other venerable groups of society who should be their allies: their families, women, other youth, immigrants from other countries etc. Without a politicized movement with communists participating and helping to develop class consciousness, these youth won't target the capitalist system which is excluding them.

The real public policy of the capitalist state for millions of young people in Mexico is unemployment, exclusion from education, drugs, violence, criminality and death. These

continued on p. 5

Need Int'l Working-Class Unity: Anti-Immigrant Racism Kills 72 Workers

TAMAULIPAS, MEXICO — Capitalism has murdered, through one of its criminal gangs, 72 immigrant workers. From the moment immigrant workers cross into Mexico they are harassed and extorted by the immigration authorities, criminal gangs, and the police. These criminals steal immigrant workers' money or kidnap them to force their relatives in the U.S. to pay a ransom that can range from $1,500 to $5,000. Some are forced to work as slaves in clandestine factories, drug fields, prostitution, or as servants in criminals' dens. Many who refuse are brutally murdered, as was the case here, or are killed while running away from immigration cops or gangs. It's a true descent into hell.

The worldwide capitalist crisis has added seven million more to the number of the poor in Mexico alone. Modern capitalism concentrates wealth in fewer and fewer hands. The majority of the wealth of the world has become concentrated in a few countries, like the U.S., and that's why many of our brothers and sisters, in spite of all the risks, are forced to migrate in search of jobs.

Only a communist revolution that smashes all borders and unites our class can put an end to this living hell for all workers. The death of our brothers and sisters motivates us to fight even harder against this criminal system.

Every year, close to 600,000 immigrant workers, mainly from Central and South America, cross the borders from Mexico into the U.S. Almost 20,000 are kidnapped. These workers are desparate to escape the misery, crime and unemployment of their home countries, harshly learning that under capitalism there is no escape. Many die; the rest find more exploitation and poverty. The essence of this system, in any corner of the world, is to extract the maximum profit from workers' sweat. The only escape is revolution.

The reaction of the Mexican government to the murder of the 72 immigrants was hypocritical. They blamed narco-traffickers and approved an empty plan that pretends to protect immigrant workers. The drug trade is one of the most profitable businesses in Mexico which couldn't be the case if there was truly an effort to combat narco-trafficking. The actual purpose of their "war on drugs" is to terrorize workers, build the military to counter workers' rebellions and to support those criminal gangs allied with the government. When innocent people die in their confrontations, Calderón and his accomplices mockingly say that they were "collateral damage." That's what workers' lives means to them.

The bosses' media hyped the accounts of the massacre as part of their terrorizing propaganda. They pushed the nationalist idea of "unity of all Mexicans" as if workers and migrants have anything in common with their billionaire bosses. They shed crocodile tears for the slave-like conditions of immigrant workers, but hide or deny the wage slavery endured by millions of workers in this country and around the world.

In the U.S. the bosses and their media organize racist government and right-wing militia attacks that attempt to blame immigrants for the capitalists' own financial crisis and runaway unemployment.

In some communities, mainly in the southern region of Mexico, people have organized to provide food and shelter to immigrant workers. This worker solidarity shows it is possible to defeat the racism and nationalism that divide us. This type of organization is the only thing that the government will try to destroy through its recently-approved agreements of protections for immigrants.

We must take the communist ideas of CHALLENGE to those communities and help transform that solidarity into a fight to destroy the cause of the problems: that the only way to escape this hell is through a communist revolution that would sweep away misery, all borders, and racism. That's the best way to honor the death of our 72 brothers and sisters. ✪

Capitalist Elections a Deadly Trap

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arch-imperialist Nelson Rockefeller wing of the G.O.P. which at one time was its backbone when President Gerald Ford appointed Nelson Vice-President in the wake of Nixon's ouster. It includes the likes of Maine's two Republican Senators, Rhode Island's Chafee, and others who have sometime cooperated with the Kennedy liberals.

Assuming the role of all-knowing, pro-imperialist advisor to such establishment Republicans, Zernike wrote (NYT, 9/18/10): "[T]he Tea Party has brought a swell of new participants to the political process, and historical and economic trends are working in favor of the party out of power — that would be you, G.O.P. The trick is to take advantage of the Tea Party passion and stay away from its extremes."

Split Congress Makes U.S. Strike on Iran More Likely

But, however effective the voting system may be in misdirecting workers' rage, it poses real problems for the bigger bosses. In Congress, differences among capitalists can cause deadlock, especially over domestic issues, such as the current, growing tax battle. The 220-year-old U.S. Constitution, itself the product of deadly competition between camps of U.S. capitalists, in fact enshrines legislative stalemates of the kind that Tea Partiers foment. The Brookings Institution, a top liberal imperialist think-tank, calls Congress the "broken branch" of ruling-class state power.

Consequently, legislatively-embattled presidents like Obama, resort more to foreign policy, where commander-in-chief status allows them freer rein to create lasting benefits for their masters. One leading strategy-analyzing firm, Strategic Forecasting (Stratfor, 9/14/10), betraying the rulers' utter disregard for human life, can't decide whether Obama's next big move will be to attack Iran or make a peace deal with it:

"Obama will come out of the November election having to turn over his cards on the only area where he can have traction — Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.…One option is to solve the Iraq problem by attacking Iran's nuclear facilities.… That leaves another option….: 'pulling a Nixon.' In 1971, Richard Nixon reached out to [then enemy] China" because it was in the rulers' interest to overlook China's backing of Vietnamese fighters in order to take advantage of the potential for U.S. entry into that vast market.

But Stratfor's crystal-ball gazers aren't banking on such a "peace" move. "What the settlement with Iran might look like is murky at best. Whether Iran has any interest in such a settlement is murkier still." Stratfor says that for Obama, "far safer is a generalized air campaign against both Iran's nuclear and conventional capability" — which his Republican rivals would be hard-pressed to oppose (especially its pro-Israel wing).

Non-stop news coverage, from both the liberals' newspapers and networks and Rupert Murdoch's pro-Tea Party media empire, underscores the importance of elections to the bosses. This campaign circus should have the opposite effect on our class, steering us away from the dead-end voting booth and towards militant fight-back against all capitalists.

For workers, organizing strikes, demonstrations and anti-imperialist, anti-racist forums, in the very areas Obama targets, would prove a far better strategy than tailing the liberal-controlled unions, churches and other mass organizations. A good place to start would be to challenge them at their mobilization of thousands of workers in Washington, D.C. on October 2, which the Democrats plan to use to bring the working class to the polls, not into militant action.

PLP'ers and friends must organize now to expose and combat the openly-racist Tea Party and the deadlier genocidal liberals and use October 2 to build the Party as indispensable steps on the road to a capitalist-crushing communist revolution. ✪

Mexico Rulers 'Policy" for Youth

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policies result from the drug trafficking industry (worth at least $70 billion) which is both lucrative and booming for the capitalists' rulers. In place of an economy organized to meet the basic needs of the youth and working class population, narco-trafficking is the industry of choice to maximize immediate profits.

Armed commandos carry out repeated executions at parties and youth detention centers. Often the ruler's claim these murders are criminal actions between drug traffickers. Some business groups and government spokespeople go so far as to express support for these genocidal policies in the name of getting rid of the "criminal element." Many people see through this explanation, and sometimes skepticism about the "war on drugs" that appears in the capitalist media.

Communists in PLP reject a system that first degrades young people, then offers a career as cannon fodder or criminal activity, and then allows extermination as a solution to "the youth problem."

Communists' participation in the class struggle is the basis for an alternative future: Thousands of young people are tired of this damn capitalist hell! Millions of young people have not fallen into the traps of organized crime, escapism with drugs and alcohol, or blaming others in their class for their situation. In the past year, thousands participated in the class struggle hoping to achieve a more just society. Many have expressed solidarity with the resistance of the fired electricians, tens of thousands led the rebellion against racist oppression and poverty in Oaxaca, thousands more stood in solidarity with them in Mexico City, and thousands of students have mobilized against exclusion from schools.

Many of these movements have confronted the government. The demand for jobs is crucial in these immediate battles because it goes to the heart of the failure of capitalism. Communists participate in these battles to turn spontaneous rebellion into an active, offensive fight to replace capitalism with communism. Communists fight now so that these youth can have a meaningful future and be part of developing a communist world that overcomes the limitations and mistakes of past movements.

Everyone in our Party: in schools, factories and communities have to take on the challenge of bringing these young people a communist perspective. During the strike at UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico), dozens of students marched with the flags of PLP, and identified with the struggle for communism. More recently in the city of Oaxaca dozens of youths also marched with the flag of the communist PLP. Our goal is to learn from and expand these small examples so that a bigger PLP is active among millions of workers and youth. This will bring the end of this murderous capitalism system one step closer. ✪

LETTERS

We encourage all readers of CHALLENGE to send in their letters about what appears in the paper and any other comments they may have.

Colombia 'Election' Scam Masks Gov't Killings

Colombia just "elected" a new president, Juan Manuel Santos, who's CEO of the newspaper "El Tiempo," with the country's largest circulation, spreading the official line of the government and the ruling class. Santos also owns 60% of the company that tallies the votes and computes statistics. He was also the Minister of Defense under Uribe, Colombia's previous president.

Under his command the government picked up young men from poor areas, "offered" them jobs, took them far from their homes, forced them to dress in military gear and then killed them. The government then claimed they had been guerrillas killed in fights with the army. This "proved" to the public that Uribe's government was winning the battle against the guerillas.

In this latest "election," by 2:00 PM on the second day of voting, the votes had already officially been counted. The winner was Uribe's "student," Santos. Although 57% of the electorate didn't vote, Santos was said to have had the highest voting rate in history.

For vice-president they picked Angelino Garzon, an ex-union leader and "ex-militant" of the "communist" party. This was to clean up Uribe's party's image internationally. It's been widely known that Uribe sponsored drug-trafficking and that his government assassinated more than 2,500 union leaders. Many more had to flee the country because their lives and their families were threatened. Uribe virtually destroyed the union movement.

So the ex-union leader is supposed to clean the government's image, telling the world that what's said about the government is untrue. But this character is a renegade from the working class, who sold us out for a plate of lentils (for nothing). He's someone who, just like the President, has no conscience. After he was discredited by the union movement his only option was to serve the rulers. He's a traitor to workers and is trying to demoralize the workers' movement, feeding workers' cynicism.

Colombia is in a deep crisis. According to the country's National Administrative Department of Statistics, the unemployment rate is 12% and the poverty rate 45%. Colombia also has nine U.S. military bases and gives the U.S. 82% of its mining agreements.

Now the ruling class wants to pretend to make war between Venezuela and Colombia to distract workers' attention and use them as bait to fight for their imperialist interests. This is part of the inter-imperialist struggle to control areas with natural resources such as oil which are vital for capitalism.

The rulers lie to the public shamelessly. The truth is that the majority of workers didn't vote because they don't believe in the candidates the wealthy select for election. Unfortunately they're not organized and the movement is scattered.

But the working class has huge potential. That's why we in PLP organize within the movement. We understand there are ups and downs. While the workers' movement is in a lull internationally, the laws of dialectics teach us that nothing is forever. We have confidence and work patiently, but urgently. We know the workers will rise up to follow the red flag of communism and sweep away all the traitors and the bourgeoisie once and for all. We will build a communist system where the workers will be the ones to benefit.

A Convinced Comrade

D.C. Mayor's Housing Edict: Homeless Need $50,000/Year!

Here's a follow up to the land occupation protest in Washington, D.C. for affordable housing reported in CHALLENGE, 8/18/2010.

For six weeks, Parcel 42 remained occupied by a few students and homeless residents and was monitored by ONE DC, the community-based organization (CBO) that led the initial seizure. Discussions with city councilman Michael Brown were continuing but no concessions were forthcoming from the Mayor. There were no efforts by the city to evict the tent residents, most likely due to the upcoming primary election.

Thousands of passers-by saw the encampment during the heat of summer, observing this very visible protest against the Mayor's policy of gentrification. Many learned how he manipulated statistics to back off his "commitment" to affordable housing by making the planned housing at Parcel 42 available only to those who make an annual income of $50,000 — a deliberately unaffordable price for displaced residents!

On August 29, ONE DC removed its tents and left its supplies for the homeless. The occupation by the community organization is over but some homeless residents remain.

The ability of a small CBO to sustain this encampment for weeks was limited by lack of support from other organizations and lack of planning for the possibility that the government would not immediately evict them. Many students and workers were on vacation in the summer and the heat was ferocious, so there was little base to expand the project.

In this sense, the project was not successful, but the visible protest and experience gives us new ideas about what it takes to build a movement. It also enables us to consider a longer, better-organized mass campaign around housing issues.

The Party members involved have talked to some of the organizers about our ideas. We've gotten a good response and had good discussions with our friends about the event. The mass work on housing and HIV/AIDS will intensify with the new academic year as public health workers and students continue to build mass actions while PL'ers keep the struggle for communism in the forefront of organizing efforts.

D.C. Red

PL'ers Lead Defiance of Racist Hysteria at 'Ground Zero'

NEW YORK CITY, September 11 — When an integrated group of about 1,000 anti-racist workers and youth rallied at City Hall in lower Manhattan, a group of PLP members and friends defied the racist hysteria surrounding the "Ground Zero mosque" as we arrived chanting, "Obama, Democrats you can't hide, we charge you with genocide!" Participants commended us for our chants and signs as we marched past and reluctantly entered the pens the police had erected to control the crowds.

Our ideas sharply contrasted with the demonstration's liberal/phony leftist leadership's advocacy that well-meaning folks need to "defend Islam." Nothing about confronting the pack of rabid racists that had gathered nearby, nothing critical of the Democrats and their expanding Middle-East war. This was PLP's role, and we filled it admirably, distributing over 300 leaflets and 400 CHALLENGES.

Most importantly, several young people new to the Party helped spread our message that no form of nationalism will serve workers' interests, whether U.S. variety serving a genocidal campaign to dominate the Middle East or Arab/Muslim nationalism that would funnel a larger portion of oil wealth and profit generated from the labor of Middle-Eastern workers into the coffers of Arab/Muslim bosses.

This combination of building a base and agitating for communist ideas requires fighting to win others to do the same. We even got a taste of low-level class struggle when cops ordered us to shut off our bullhorns and we refused for a time, practicing on a very small scale the type of defiance needed to eventually make revolution happen.

While overall a very good struggle, still with bolder plans, tighter organization and more numbers we could have produced a more effective challenge to the leadership's passive tone. We will apply these communist lessons to confront the liberal/Democratic love-fest the union leadership and their ruling-class masters have planned for the October 2 Washington, D.C. march. ✪

Founder's Greeting to PL Convention

(Here is a statement from a Chicago comrade, one of the founders of the Party, who asked it be conveyed to our recent convention. He is in declining health, but still committed to our goals and to the organization.)

"We must... fight against this racist system and build the organization. The only way to have any kind of future is to make this fight primary, because we cannot do what we need to do without fighting racism with working-class, multiracial unity and international solidarity. I cannot do much these days, and I wish I could do more. I did lead a struggle to keep a black worker on his job and led a struggle to allow some of the residents of my retirement area to have the right to sing songs in the common area. So, even if I can't be with you, I send you greetings in the name of all the comrades from the old movement who did many great things, even though they did not lead to the revolution we dreamed of. Fight for communism, power to the workers!

Capitalism's Horrors and Class Consciousness Spark for Red Fires

Nothing demonstrates the bankruptcy of capitalism more than the Chinese boss who, knowing the terrible working conditions in his factory, is making all new hires swear that they will not commit suicide (CHALLENGE 8/18)! For the vast majority of workers around the world, starvation wages are only part of capitalism's horrors. Oppressive speed-ups, racist and sexist exploitation, and unhealthy heat and air quality are the norm, not the exception, under capitalism.

The vast majority of workers in factories and fields are forced to endure long days of monotonous and repetitive tasks. Workers are treated as replaceable machines with little connection to the final product that they have labored to build and that most can't afford to buy. Teenage women with nimble fingers are forced to work 12-hour days on factory assembly lines for minimum wages until the grueling wear and tear of their labor weakens their hands and profit-hungry bosses discard them into a growing army of unemployed workers.

Even workers who have jobs that look as if they should be satisfying (like teachers) find their work frustrating and demoralizing. Boards of Education enforce "teaching to the test" — emphasizing rote memorization instead of the creative thinking that our working-class children need to learn to overthrow capitalism. The racist, sexist and nationalist content of public "education" around the world is an insult to the creativity of teachers and students alike.

The process of work that should be a source of pride and accomplishment is turned by capitalism into its opposite — dehumanizing drudgery where the boss steals the lion's share of what is produced by pocketing the profits off our labor (what Marx identified as surplus value).

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MORE LETTERS

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Communist organization of production, though, can turn this all around. Workers in Shanghai, China, at the height of the Cultural Revolution, seized their factories in an attempt to reverse the capitalist road that Chinese leaders had taken and move toward a communist system of production. Workers took time every day to meet to discuss developments around the world and to reorganize work in the factory to gain greater satisfaction and control over their daily labor.

Building communist consciousness and understanding of what is necessary to create an egalitarian society and communist forms of production became the goal, instead of maximizing production and profits. This example of workers uniting together in the struggle for communism is a beacon of light for the world's workers and a lesson for what we have to do today.

Worker suicides are a great tragedy for our class, but they should only strengthen our resolve to struggle against capitalist oppression. We can begin to overcome our alienation by uniting with even just one other worker in a fight against the oppression that we all face. A spark of mutual support and collective action can, as Chinese communists were fond of saying, start a prairie fire. We have a world to win where capitalist alienation will be only a bad memory. Join us in struggle for a communist future.

NYC RED

A-Bomb Terrorism

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• In President Harry Truman's diary, he referred to a decoded Japanese cable indicating Japan was about to surrender unconditionally, as the "Jap[anese] Emperor asking for peace."

• On July 17, 1945, three weeks before Hiroshima, Truman wrote in his diary he believed the Soviet Union would "be in the Jap[anese] war by August 15. Fini Japs when that comes about." (In May, 1945, at the Yalta Conference, Soviet leader Josef Stalin had promised Truman that the Red Army would enter the war against Japan within three months after the Nazi surrender. The latter occurred on May 8, 1945; the Soviets swept into Japanese-occupied Manchuria on August 8 and were preparing an invasion of homeland Japan.)

• General Dwight Eisenhower (later President), commander of U.S-British forces in Europe, had said it was his "belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary…and no longer mandatory to save American lives." (Eisenhower: "Mandate for Change"; 1963) In 1945, Eisenhower had told that very same belief to War Secy. Stimson.

• Army Air Force commander General Henry Arnold wrote, "It always appeared to us that atomic bomb or no atomic bomb, the Japanese were already on the verge of collapse," ("Global Mission"; 1949)

• General Douglas MacArthur, U.S. commander in the Pacific, believed the dropping of the bombs were "completely unnecessary from a military point of view." (James Clayton, "The Years of MacArthur, 1941-1945, Vol. II")

A Dagger At the Heart of the Soviet Union

If the overwhelming evidence proved that the mass murder at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was militarily unnecessary, that Japan was ready to agree to unconditional surrender, why were these bombs dropped?

• With the Red Army ready to enter the war against Japan by August 8, the U.S. rushed to use the A-Bomb before the official Japanese surrender to demonstrate to the Soviets that the U.S. now had what Truman's War Secy. Stimson referred to as a "master card": "Let our actions speak for words. The Russians will understand them better than anything else….We have to regain the lead…in a pretty rough and realistic way….We have coming into action a weapon which will be unique." (Stimson Diary)

• Truman's Secy. of State James Byrnes told him that, "The atomic bomb might well put us in a position to dictate our own terms at the end of the war." (Truman: "Year of Decision")

• A-Bomb Project scientist Leo Szilard, in meeting with Byrnes in May 1945, recalled that, "Mr. Byrnes did not argue that it was necessary to use the bomb against the cities of Japan in order to win the war…. Mr. Byrnes's….view [was] that our possessing and demonstrating the bomb would make Russia more manageable in Europe." (Leo Szilard, "A Personal History of the Atomic Bomb"; 1949)

It's clear that the liberal Democratic Truman administration didn't want Japan to surrender before the A-Bomb could be used. On June 6, 1945, Stimson told Truman that he was "fearful" that before the A-Bombs were delivered, the U.S. Air Force would have Japan "so bombed out" that the A-Bomb "would not have a fair background to show its strength."

Obviously U.S. rulers would be "showing that strength" to the Soviets, a "show" that genocidally slaughtered well over a quarter of million innocent Japanese civilians. In what amounted to an indictment of the Truman administration, atomic scientist Szilard stated that, "If the Germans had dropped atomic bombs on cities,…we would have defined [it]…as a war crime, and we would have sentenced the Germans who were guilty of this crime to death at Nuremburg and hanged them."

It remains for the international working class to mete out this justice to the most murderous war criminals the world has ever known. ✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Documented, you're also in slavery

NYT, 9/8 — In the abuse of legal foreign workers, the numbers vary but the methods are the same. It is slavery without shackles. Its perpetrators seldom have to resort to violence or even threats of violence. Since workers are buried in debt before they even leave their home countries, the threat of being fired and deported is enough.

To lose a guest-worker job means irreparable harm: destitution, unpayable debt, the loss of mortgaged family land. Under those conditions, a worker will accept any abuse, live and work in squalor and do what he is told….American history is full of examples of large-scale abuses…from the Bracero program for Mexicans in the 1940s to the present day.

Korea was also a war built on lies

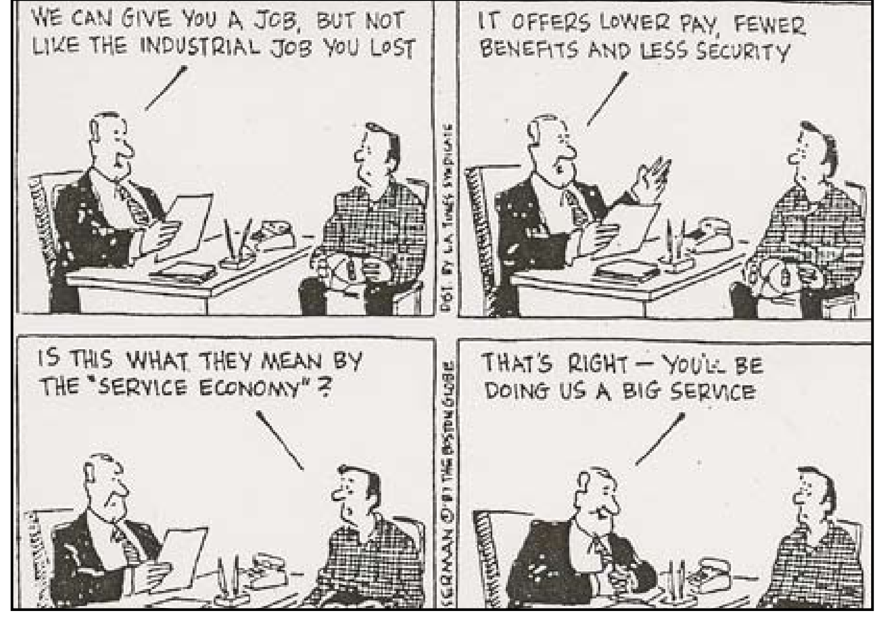
NYT, 9/12 — Bruce Cumings is a historian at the University of Chicago….Cumings has long championed a revisionist interpretation of the origins of the Korean War. He dismisses as fairy tale the notion that Valiant America swooped in to rescue a Little Red Riding Hood menaced by malevolent Communists. Instead, Cummings believes that then, just as now, American leaders and the Western media have consistently blackened North Korea's reputation….

Sound improbable? Well, yes. But Cumings has done a lot of research over the years, has a superb grasp of his material and is never less than stimulating. As he portrays it, American became mired in a civil war between the North, whose leader Kim Il-sung, had gallantly fought against the Japanese in Manchuria starting in 1932, and the South, whose leadership consisted largely of collaborators with the Japanese occupation. According to Cumings, the North Koreans "essentially saw the war in 1950 as a way to settle the hash of the top command of the South Koreans Army, nearly all of whom has served the Japanese."

Business cycles scar working class

GW, 9/10 — Other recessions prove that the legacy of the past three years will be long-lasting. Unemployment at an early age can leave permanent scars; students in the U.S. show that someone laid off during a recession will suffer an earning loss even when they get back into the labour market. They go into less well-paid employment and earn less than those fortunate enough to remain in work. But there are also wider social costs. The loss of a job has a marked impact on health, with the mortality rate of the jobless significantly higher. Children suffer when their parents are laid off: they fall behind in school and tend to earn less than the offspring of those who stay working.

The long-term costs of unemployment threaten to be severe.



Hardest workers face raw deal

NYT, 9/13 — Though more Americans are retiring early, it is not always voluntary. A 2006 study found that 40 percent of early retirees said they were forced into it, about half for health reasons.

"If you try to punish people for retiring earlier" by raising the retirement age, "you're punishing people who aren't choosing it." One in three workers over age 58 does a physically demanding job that can be radically different at age 69 than at age 62. Still others work under difficult conditions, like exposure to heat or cold, exposure to contaminants or weather, cramped workplaces or standing for long stretches.

In all, 45 percent of older workers held such difficult jobs. For janitors, nurses' aides, plumbers, cashiers, waiters, cooks, carpenters, maintenance workers and others raising the retirement age may mean squeezing more out of a declining body…. raising the Social Security retirement age will have a disproportionate impact on lower-income workers and minorities, who tend to have lower life-expectancies and so fewer years of collecting benefits.

Sure, U.S. is in Iraq to do good

Truthdig.com — It is utter nonsense for Obama, who in the past has made clear his belief that the Bush administration's case for this war was a tissue of lies, to now state: "The United States has paid a huge price to put the future of Iraq in the hands of its people." We paid a huge price simply to… exploit post-9/11 fears [and] to go to war with a nation that had nothing whatsoever to do with that attack.

Without hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Americans dead and maimed and at a cost of $3 trillion to American taxpayers, the U.S. imperial adventure in Iraq had left that country in a horrible mess, controlled by a corrupt and deeply divided elite….

Did the invasion even make more secure our access to Mideast oil rights?

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

U.S. A-Bomb Terror Murdered 300,000, Triggered Cold War

This August marked the 65th anniversary of the single most terrorist act in world history, the U.S. ruling class dropping of atomic bombs on two Japanese cities, Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9), obliterating them and murdering over 300,000 civilians. A City of Hiroshima report (8/6/2004) stated that the cumulative death total of atomic bomb victims was 237,062 (CBS News, 8/6/2005) plus another 75,000 from the after-effects in Nagasaki. Not coincidentally, the racist U.S. rulers had no compunction about perpetrating this horrific attack on a non-white population.

In this era of a U.S. "war on terror" and Obama's hypocritical pronouncements about a world "free of nuclear weapons," it is the U.S. rulers he represents who stand guilty of this genocidal act, the only ones ever to have used nuclear weapons. Rather than "ending World War II" (as they claim), it actually was a political warning to the then socialist Soviet Union and signaled U.S. imperialism's launching of the Cold War.

'Militarily Unnecessary': Japan Ready to Surrender BEFORE the Atomic Bombings

The U.S. rulers floated the falsehood that the A-Bomb attacks were necessary to "force Japanese surrender" and avoid a U.S. land invasion of Japan that "could result in 1,000,000 U.S. casualties." That Big Lie outdid even the Hitler fascists. Japan's rulers were ready to surrender before the atomic bombings:

• The United States Strategic Bombing Survey reported that, "Certainly...in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bomb had not been dropped...and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated. (Survey: "Japan's Struggle to End the War")

• "The hard truth is that the atomic bombings were unnecessary. A million lives were not saved. Indeed, McGeorge Bundy, the man who popularized this figure, later confessed that he had pulled it out of the air in order to justify the bombings in a 1947 Harper's magazine essay he had ghostwritten for Secretary of War Henry Stimson." ("The Myths of Hiroshima," LA Times, 8/5/05)

• On March 9, 1945, "100,000 to 200,000 men, women and children died...when the U.S. Air Force doused Tokyo with jellied gasoline; all told, in the months before Hiroshima, [conventional] bombs killed up to 500,000 in Japanese cities and left 13 million homeless." (U.S. News & World Report, 7/13/95)

• By the spring of 1945, Japan's entire industrial and military machine had ground to a halt, severing its oil lifeline. By June, U.S. Air Force General Curtis LeMay complained that there was nothing left to bomb in Japanese cities except "garbage can targets."

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Japan's Workers Need to Smash Racist 'Net' Group

This last year has witnessed the rise of the wide-spread racist "Net Far Right" (Net Kyoku) that has coordinated attacks on "foreigners" in Japan. As reported in the New York Times (8/28/10), they organize mostly through the internet in order to conceal their identity, are "loudly anti-foreign" and direct their attack on Korean and Chinese residents, Christian organizations, and even those who dress in Halloween costumes.

Much like the U.S. Tea Party's racist attacks against immigrant labor from the Global South, the "Net" blame foreigners for the financial crisis that has lingered in Japan for over ten years, for the rise in crime and homelessness in Western Japan, and for the decline in pro-Japanese sentiment, particularly by young Japanese. The similarity between the Tea Party and the "Net" is clear in another respect: they are both convenient devices used by the ruling class for creating dissonance among workers from various cultural backgrounds who should be united in fighting the real enemy, the capitalist bosses.

Apologists at the New York Times (NYT) suggest that the "Net" are distinct from other far-right groups, citing that the established right-wing (Uyoku) make themselves visible on a regular basis in Tokyo and other major cities around Japan. The "Net" racists, though, are equally sinister and cowardly in their attacks on Korean and Chinese immigrant groups, many of whom have been in Japan since they were brought as slave labor during World War II and have not been granted citizenship.

NYT apologists also fail to point out that ultranationalist groups hijacked the expanding working-class and peasant movements in the 1920's and 30's, leading to the rise of Japanese fascism which used racism and sexism to legitimize the rapes and slaughter of workers in most of East Asia, such as the genocides in Nanking and Korea.

Deep-rooted ultra-nationalism and racism has continued to govern the censorship of history books, which discount the genocides committed by Japan in China, Korea, and Southeast Asia. The grossest example of this is the recent film 'The Truth about Nanking,' directed by the ultranationalist and fascist Satoru Mizushima and backed by the outspoken fascist and racist Mayor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, which alleges that the Nanking Massacre was created as propaganda that intended to demean the image of Japan in the world.

Racist ultranationalists are closely linked to ruling-class parties, such as the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) which ruled Japan almost continuously from its founding in 1955 to 2009. Figures like the wartime profiteer Yoshio Kodama, who helped found the LDP, and the right-wing Nihimura Shingo; who has ties to the current ruling Democratic Party of Japan; and fascists like Mayor Ishihara, who has openly called for violence against foreigners in the past, are examples of how the ultra-right and ruling-class parties are linked.

The inter-imperialist rivalry between the U.S. and China for the control of the world's recourses, including the struggle to dominate the East China Sea, is part of the larger framework for how the "Net" and other racist groups can be utilized by ruling elites to increase nationalist sentiment, particularly as Japan is right in the middle of the U.S.-China dogfight. As the New York Times has been reporting since the spring of this year, China has expanded its naval power "from as far as the Persian Gulf to the Strait of Malacca" in order to "secure Chinese interests" which include oil from the Middle East.

The resource-rich South and East China Seas, in which Chinese engineers discovered natural gas reserves off the coast of the disputed Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands, has also sparked recent political trouble between Japan and China. The U.S. is expanding its influence in the region through the continued colonization of Okinawa, which is host to one of the largest U.S. military instillations in the world.

The struggle against ultra-nationalism by students and teachers in recent years over the censoring of textbooks and the inclusion of the fascist national anthem (Kimigayo) needs to be extended to oppose racist groups like the "Net" and other Uyoku who terrorize immigrant and foreign populations and who are manipulated by capitalist bosses. The time has come to forget reformists like the Japanese Communist Party and other movements who offer false promises of a "peaceful transition to socialism," and build an internationalist communist movement led by the PLP in Japan and East Asia to smash racism and nationalism and create a world built on human need, not profit! ✪